# The CANDID FRIEND

## CHRISTMAS ALBUM

1901

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# *The* CANDID FRIEND.

## CHRISTMAS ALBUM.

CONTAINING A SERIES OF TWENTY-FIVE PHOTOGRAVURE PORTRAITS, ACCOMPANIED BY CRITICAL NOTICES, OF CELEBRITIES OF THE DAY.

CHRISTMAS, 1901.

PUBLISHED AT THE OFFICES OF "THE CANDID FRIEND,"
12 and 13, HENRIETTA STREET, LONDON, W.C.

# THE
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# CHRISTMAS
# ALBUM
# 1901.

1C99400

Beaufort House Printing Works,
30-32, Sardinia Street,
London, W.C.

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The
foregoing
photogravures
form the weekly
supplements issued with
THE CANDID FRIEND,
published every
Wednesday,
price 6d.

No. I.

# SIR HENRY IRVING.

# Sir Henry Irving.

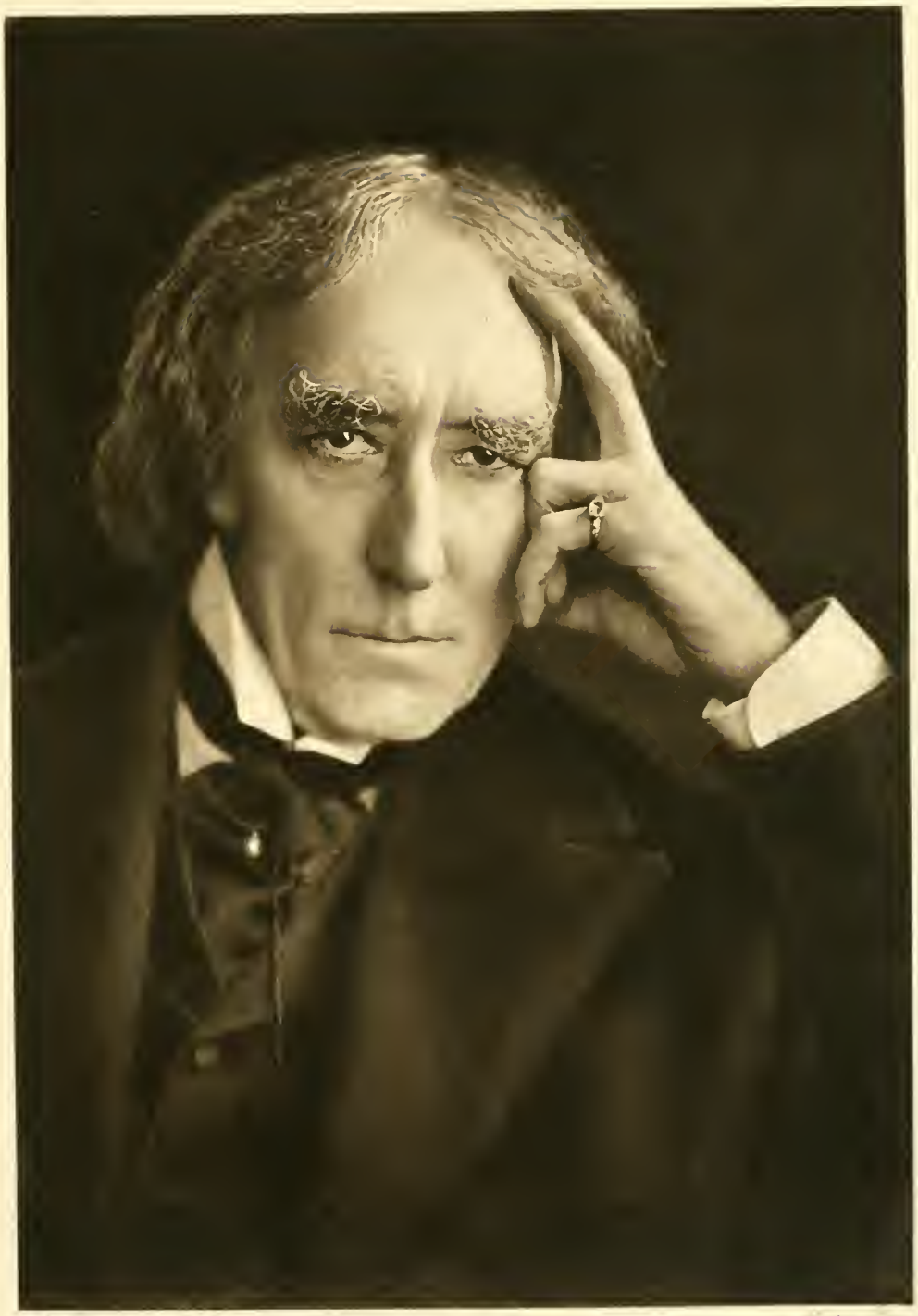
THE tenacity which Disraeli showed in his attacks on Peel and in the education of the Tory Party, Sir Henry Irving displayed in his apprenticeship to the stage and in his devotion to the legitimate drama. To liberalise the Conservatives was scarcely a more hazardous enterprise than to educate the English playgoer of the eighties to Shakespeare. Both men gave themselves up to a speciality. Irving, when he was in the company at the Manchester Theatre, refused all social engagements. Once some of the company called upon him, and besought him to join them at skittles, or some such carnal pursuit. He was practising "make-ups," and he declined. When one of the revellers, who lived in the same house as Irving, returned, he saw him before the glass, still making-up.

This must not be understood to justify the heresy that anyone can do anything if only he take pains enough. Mr. Bartley, M.P., could not write the novels of Mr. George Meredith. Tenacity by itself does nothing greater than making money. But Sir Henry Irving's tenacity was vitalised by a great talent. He showed it in "Hunted Down," at the St. James's; the critics saw it in Digby Grand; and the public received it as a galvanic shock in "The Bells." Since then, the talent and its limitations have been revealed and acknowledged. But the qualities of the man have been obscured by the success of the actor. Sir Henry is a specialist, not by allowing one pursuit to absorb his faculties, but by developing his faculties in the exercise of one pursuit. His resourcefulness, his foresight, and his adaptability are Disraelian.

In Disraeli's letters to his sister, he exclaims, "I will succeed; I will be famous. They shall acknowledge me." The spirit is condemned by moralists, a feeble folk, who usually become Liberal Unionists. Morality apart, it is a common and natural spirit, and it is gratified in two, or perhaps three, out of a thousand cases. It has been gratified in Sir Henry's case, and there can be no doubt that this spirit has been one of his motive forces. It is there in the piercing and unresponsive eye, in the mouth, too; and its existence can be proved in other ways. Yet Sir Henry's nature is kindly and sympathetic, and these qualities are not shown merely in subscriptions to charities.

I have found myself forgetting that he is an actor. Unless obliged, he does not talk about the theatre. He seems to be very much interested in human nature, and he has seen a great deal of it. I think he takes Montaigne's view of it: the indulgent, humorous, and unsentimental view. His temperament is ardent and patient, impulsive and cautious, lavish and calculating. His judgment is sound, but he acts often from feeling. He loves collectively the profession he has done so much for, but he does not greatly care to have the best actors in his company. The brilliance and the tumult of success are dear to him, but his kindest, his noblest actions are known only to two persons: himself and the other one.

No English actor, not Kean nor Garrick, has equalled the achievements of Sir Henry Irving. They were greater actors, perhaps, but they never held with their countrymen and their profession the position Sir Henry holds and has held so long. If the farm labourer knows an actor's name, it is Sir Henry Irving's; and if the booth mummer exempts one actor from his criticism, it is Sir Henry. His pre-eminence has been challenged, and with one uniform result: failure. While he lives and while he acts—it is the same thing—he must be the first of English actors, the first of managers. If such a position as his went by devolution, I believe I am right in saying that it would go to Mr. Forbes Robertson, and I think I am also right in saying that this is Sir Henry Irving's opinion, and his wish, too.—THE CANDID FRIEND, June 22nd, 1901. C. G. C.



*Sir Henry Irving*

No. II.

# MADAME SARAH BERNHARDT.

# Madame Sarah Bernhardt.

NEVER did heredity play so mean a trick as when she gave the King of Rome to a world which had been scared into hysteria by Napoleon. There were, undoubtedly, moments when the half-fledged offspring had some of the Eagle's strength of flight; when neurasthenia gave a brilliancy to the child's eyes almost as strong as the genius-fire which shone in the father's. But, in reality, this Eaglet was a poor creature, and it wanted the talent of the poet Rostand to create an interest in his etiolated life; it wanted the genius of a Bernhardt to make us listen to a page of his history, however well told.

She and Coquelin the elder, the baker's son who is the greatest comedian of our times, have taken the lines of Rostand, and made what was at the best merely brilliant dialogue into an absorbing drama. In itself, "L'Aiglon" is badly constructed and at times almost ridiculous in its scenic exaggerations. Its history is incorrect and it is melodramatic to an extent that would make even Mr. George R. Sims writhe. But the actor's art has saved it, and the most hypercritical of audiences could not but clap their hands even when the horrors of Wagram are retold by super-ghosts who wave their arms tragically over a property battle-field.

I wanted to hear what Sarah herself thought of it all; so the other night I sent my card up to her between the third and fourth acts, with a line on it to ask if she would receive me. "Come up," she answered. I found my way, through groups of Austrian ladies and nobles in wonderful costumes and rouge and powder, to a dressing-room in which were assembled, in a half-moon court, Clarkson, the wig-maker, whose art is world-famous, a very beautiful American woman with a handsome youth as *cavaliere servente*, two or three dressers, a secretary, and two greyhounds. With her figure bent backwards and her hands at her head, Sarah Bernhardt was standing before a looking-glass. She turned as I came into the room, and gave me her hand. I took it and with several "*enchantés*" plunged *in medias res*.

"All about yourself, madame, is what I want. Will you not tell it to me?" I asked. "A few words about your life in its childhood and its maturity, your art, your loves: all that is you." "*Mon Dieu, monsieur*, you want me to give you an autobiography in five minutes. Is it fair? I will try to write it down for you. Come and see me on Sunday at the Carlton, about mid-day, and I will have it ready for you." I was delighted, and, bowing over her hand, I went away full of dreams of what the stories of Dona Sol, Adrienne Lecouvreur, Cleopatra, Léonora, Gismonda, Lady Macbeth, and Hamlet would be when told by the wonderful Jewess who had been all of them by turns and none of them long.

But I had reckoned without the *pium' al vento* nature of the extraordinary creature, the principal note of whose life has been inconsequence. I had forgotten that, though she is Dutch, she has always been French; that, though she is of the race of Israel, there was a moment in her career when an image of Mary the Virgin was its lodestone; that she was wimpled nun and actress at one and the same moment, as she has also been spendthrift and bargain-maker, jealous and magnanimous, small and great—all in an hour.

"I am glad to see you," she said, when I went to fetch her story. Then to her maid: "*Je dois sortir: mon manteau!* No, no," turning to me; "of course I haven't done it. I have had no time. I am so terribly tired. Do not work me now. You cannot understand how hard it is. Night after night, I come back here broken with the fatigue of my own emotions: dead-beat, but hungry for more. *Mais, tout de même, je tacherai de le faire.*" What could I do but kiss the hand whose gestures have moved half the world, and leave her to her Sunday recreation?

There were a hundred questions I should have asked her: of her naughtiness at school: of the early days when the critics mocked at her unformed manner and the poor little voice, which later they called divine and golden: of the £6 a month salary at the Odéon, and of the thousands which her art has given to her in the last twenty years; of the bitterness of early failure, and of the subsequent years of unbroken success. I wanted her to tell me which is the best part she has played, wondering whether her subjective and my objective would meet in "La Tosca." I was anxious to hear from her of the pictures she has painted, and of the marble she has chiselled into living shapes. But the *voce d'oro* was tired, and I had no right to tax it with my curiosity.

I saw her again at the theatre. I showed her a proof of THE CANDID FRIEND portrait of her. She and those with her praised it. But she never gave me the life-tale she had promised me: perhaps, indeed, she couldn't write it; it isn't easy to lay bare one's soul in words.—THE CANDID FRIEND, July 6th, 1901.

J. S. H.

Sarah Bernhardt

No. III.

# MISS JULIA NEILSON.

# Miss Julia Neilson.

MR. W. S. GILBERT deserves well of his country, for he has written "The Bab Ballads," and has introduced Miss Julia Neilson to the stage. About fifteen years ago, Mr. Rutland Barrington produced Mr. Gilbert's comedy, "Brantingham Hall," at the St. James's Theatre. The first performance had a peculiar interest. Rumour, in her modern form of the inspired paragraph, whipped the playgoer's curiosity many degrees above normal. The whole audience knew that the leading part had been entrusted to a young lady who was beginning the profession.

The play was not a success, but Miss Neilson was not a failure, except as an actress. The public did not expect her to be one, but they were delighted with her appearance and her sincerity. "Brantingham Hall" expired amidst the *fanfare* that is the usual *requiem* of Mr. Gilbert's serious pieces. There were letters in the papers, and a manifesto addressed to an unappreciative public, and I think Mr. Gilbert instructed his solicitors, but nothing came of all the fuss.

Miss Neilson, who has a fine voice, had been trained for the concert stage, and that is not the right training for the theatre. The lyric drama has produced few great actresses: Titiens and Calvé notwithstanding. Miss Neilson must have perceived this. She set herself to acquire the methods of the dramatic stage by playing any part that came in her way. She learnt her art under the eyes of the London public, and they were pleased to watch the slow development of her talent. At one time, London audiences were the court of final appeal in things artistic, but that is not the case now. They like to see people learning their profession.

To the *virtuoso*, or the man of feeling, the spectacle is often painful and pathetic. It hurts him to see a lady whose talent is for the expression of the primary instincts crashing the porcelain of comedy. He thinks that these things should not be done in public. "All great things are accomplished," says the other, "in silence, in solitude, in darkness." Now, there is the silence of the country theatre, the solitude of a touring company, the obscurity of the provincial town!

The public and the connoisseur never agree; and in the case of Miss Neilson, the connoisseur has not suffered much. If he did not care for her in the part she was playing, it was so easy to forget the character and remember Miss Neilson. She is always worth looking at. Nature has endowed her greatly, giving her beauty of feature, of form, and of voice. Miss Neilson and her cousin, Miss Lily Hanbury, are the tallest of our actresses. Miss Neilson's height is heroic, but her temperament is kindly. There is a massive and sumptuous kindliness about her which suggests the heroines of Ariosto: those who wore the becoming armour, I mean.

Yet Miss Neilson's greatest success has been in a serious and passionate part: as Constance in "King John." As that unhappy woman, she reached the greatest height in her artistic career. She gave direct and truthful expression to emotion: not to real emotion, but to emotion that has been imaginatively created. Then Miss Neilson showed that she had that undoubted gift: the power of imagining the universal. The gifts of actors are rarely put under bushels; but Miss Neilson has made the public wait a long time. Are they not to see her at her best again?

Everyone knows that Miss Julia Neilson married Mr. Fred Terry, but I do not think that it is known that Miss Neilson changed her voice when she changed her name. The Terry voice is catching: I shut my eyes and hear Miss Ellen Terry; I open them and, behold, Miss Neilson is on the stage! The resemblance in this respect is the more striking because these ladies have little else in common. Certainly, they are both tall, and, as they both play characters of gaiety, I have been struck by the difference of their gaiety, and especially of their movement, and I have come to the conclusion that Miss Neilson is more an actress of passion than of comedy.—THE CANDID FRIEND, July 13th, 1901.

C. G. C.

*Miss Julia Neilson.*

No. IV.

# MR. H. BEERBOHM TREE.

# Mr. Herbert Beerbohm Tree.

MR. HERBERT BEERBOHM TREE is at present our only actor, actively engaged in his profession, who has ambition, a strain of poetry, and a romantic imagination. Mr. Tree has many friends, but very few of them know him. He is so completely the actor that he seldom throws off the mask, even when he is off the stage. This is not to say that he is a *poseur*. If anything, he does not pose enough to ensure that boom of success which, in the press, at any rate, accompanies actors who cannot compare in merit with him.

He is a child of nature. He believes everything everybody says, and listens to everybody's advice: or seems to. He has a monumental capacity for suffering a bore. I have seen old gentlemen, legal old gentlemen, antiquarian old gentlemen, British Museum old gentlemen, buttonhole him, and pin him to one-sided conversations in which they did all the talking, until I ached in sympathy with what I knew he must be suffering. But he never stirred a muscle. There was, perhaps, a twinkle in his mild, blue eye; but he listened, or seemed to listen, with a patience the Wedding Guest might have envied. And he said "Ah!" and he murmured "Yes" in a manner which encouraged the bore to bore to greater depths.

The press has never done Mr. Tree justice. But that is because the press is "a hass.' The average critic can only understand an actor as long as he plays himself. This accounts for the colossal triumphs of most of our actors. The moment an actor steps out of his own personality, the professional critic is non-plussed: before the unexpected, he is dumb.

But Mr. Tree is always doing the unexpected. When he is announced in a new part, you know you are to see something new. When he appears on the stage in such a part, there is always an appreciable pause before the audience recognises him. He is the only living actor who composes his personage; and, in the composition, his face and his figure are allowed only a proportionate share. He does not trade on them. He may be described as making-up from inside outwards. It is the mind of the character he is representing which determines the character's form and features. He mixes his grease-paint with brains.

As a manager, he is equally wonderful. He is the only manager who has made Shakespeare interesting. Others have made him impressive, solemn, gloomy, fantastic, scholarly, and everything that is dull; but Mr. Tree has invariably brought out the humanity latent in a Shakespearean play. That is a great achievement. We were no longer present at religious functions or exercises for the upper sections of Board schools and polytechnics. We suddenly found ourselves face to face with men and women. He taught even Mr. Waller to be human. He has nonplussed Mr. Raleigh by bringing Shakespeare within the charmed circle of the commercial drama. "Julius Cæsar" probably made as much money as the "Price of Peace." This disconcerted Mr. Archer, and set Mr. Lee a-moaning and a-groaning, but the British public rejoiced to discover that the poet with whom they had been bored to extinction at school, and at other theatres, was a real live poet, and not a Racine or a Corneille. So they filled Her Majesty's, and Mr. Tree was not obliged to open a subscription-list for curates and ushers, or to form himself into a limited liability company. Nowadays, that is no small distinction. Moreover, he has fostered contemporary authors: and, while one manager was prating of the poetical play he was to produce some day, he up and produced it. And he manages his theatre in a manner which shows that he respects his public and respects himself. You can be seen going into Her Majesty's without being ashamed of yourself. It is clean, it is spacious, and it is not a den of thieves.—THE CANDID FRIEND, July 20th, 1901.

J. A. L.

*Mr Herbert Beerbohm Tree*

No. V.

# MR. MARTIN HARVEY.

# Mr. Martin Harvey.

"SIR GALAHAD!" These words, which ordinarily pay the highest compliment to manhood, convey a sting of reproach when applied to Mr. Martin Harvey. For the actor, more particularly when he is manager also, stultifies himself in achieving the Grail of his imagination. "To-day, princes; to-morrow, beggars: it is only when they are themselves that they are nothing." Wriggle as they may, actors are still pinned fast by Hazlitt's gibe. In the quest after success, they cannot pursue the best that is in themselves with steady eye and undimmed faith. Rather must they turn aside with Lancelot and Bors to cope with every adventure that besets their path. And, lacking this spirit of daring, Mr. Harvey stands to-day exactly where he stood when the "Only Way" revealed him as an actor of exceptional promise and a manager of undeveloped aim.

Season has succeeded season; plays, not a few, have been produced by him, but the situation continues practically unaltered. He remains an actor of rare qualities, full of melancholic charm, of grace and feeling, though these are more often suggested than definitely revealed. The promise is, in fact, still unfulfilled. On the other hand, his aims as manager have become more defined. He follows the line of least resistance, unwittingly, to his own undoing. Sentimentality wooed him in the person of Sydney Carton, and, winning him, has held him ever since a willing bondslave. Yet he is unaware of his slavery. And this blissful, fatal ignorance does not spring from any vitiated taste. It is the product of an abnormal point of view. When Toff Jim was knouted to death in the press a few months ago, Mr. Harvey was positively distressed. To the critics, the play was a piece of tawdry sentimentalism, crude and repellent. The actor-manager firmly believed that it presented one of the eternal problems of life. You see, the abnormal point of view.

So it was when, listening to the haunting duet of parting between Charles I. and his Queen at the Lyceum, a jarring note was struck by my neighbour in the pit, a stalwart guardsman. Leaning apologetically across me, he enquired of his comrade, in a voice shaking with suppressed laughter, "Bill, ain't his fyce like the mute's?" Again, the abnormal point of view! For me, as for most, Irving's face was transfigured, lit with spiritual beauty, and crowned with the halo of impending martyrdom. To this guardsman it conveyed nothing but a reminiscence of some claret-nosed, rheumy-eyed Pimlico mute. And his point of view, like Mr. Harvey's, has the supreme defect of being singular. It is all very well of Ibsen to protest that "the majority is always wrong." The theatre cannot thrive on the suffrages of the minority, however bright-eyed: least of all, when the minority consists of one!

But it is not only in his point of view that Mr. Harvey proclaims himself a sentimentalist. It is written in every feature of his student's face, shines through eyes veiled with mysticism, lurks in the sensitive nostrils, and in the slight, curving lips. Here is the face of a Romeo, bereft of passion, and suffused with an ethereal, effeminate tenderness: as such it figures, in counterfeit, on the bedroom mantel of every girl in Suburbia. And, lately, Mr. Harvey was minded to fit the body of "the star-crossed lover" to the face. He was wise, however, to refrain, at least for the present. For, until his skin of sentimentality is sloughed, the *Roméo écolier* of M. Rostand's precious "Romanesques" is more akin to his nature than the full-blooded youth of Shakespeare's Romeo.

One is conscious in Mr. Martin Harvey of fine qualities, of poetic charm, of artistic endeavour beyond the ordinary, and of the priceless boon of youth; one is vexed by affectations and by a mincing prettiness which apes femininity. Even now, Mr. Harvey stands at the parting of the ways. On the one hand, the brilliant career of Sir Henry Irving points the steep and thorny road to artistic renown; on the other, the invidious position of Mr. Forbes Robertson reminds him of the dangers besetting the primrose path of dalliance. The selection, for his next production, of "Eugene Aram," with the inevitable sentimentalising of the murderer's character, is ominous. It is not yet too late for repentance. But Mr. Harvey must make haste. The sands are running low, and, when the last has slipped through, his career will be determined. Artist or artificer: which will he elect to be?—THE CANDID FRIEND, July 27th, 1901. R. G. B.

Mr. Harlan Harvey

No. VI.

# MRS. LANGTRY.

# Mrs. Langtry.

IN the theatre, as in the drapery-trade, opportunism is the recipe for success. When Sir Squire Bancroft managed the Haymarket Theatre, he described himself as a shop-keeper, and he ran his shop on the principle of giving the public what it wanted. All successful shops are run on that principle. In 1881, he achieved a great *coup de théatre*, and Mrs. Langtry made her first appearance on any stage at the Haymarket on December 15th of that year, playing Miss Hardcastle in "She Stoops to Conquer."

The bare statement of this event requires amplification for those who were not "in the movement" at that time. In 1880, the modern era had begun. Like the dry bones in the prophet's vision, the ideas of the English had begun to move. England was conscious and articulate and awakened. She noticed things, and particularly she noticed society and beauty. In the fulness of time, came the professional beauty. The phrase was either needless or inaccurate, but it was meant to describe the ladies who were at the same time beautiful and in society. A surprising number of ladies seemed to have these qualifications. Professional beauties increased and multiplied. Every parish had its champion: even the dwellers in Notting Hill and in the parts of Surrey round about Carshalton had their local deities. The thing became parochial, and that is ridiculous. Into the darkness went the professional beauties, all but one.

Three women have touched the popular imagination during the last fifty years. They are Jenny Lind, Miss Florence Nightingale, and Mrs. Langtry. It may not be worth while to touch the popular imagination, but it takes a lot of doing. It is only done by the man or woman who represents or expresses the dim common multitudes and their feelings and aspirations. For the England of 1880, Mrs. Langtry represented society and beauty. In such matters, the people judge rightly.

Of Mrs. Langtry's beauty there was never any doubt, and her association with the world of pleasure was proclaimed in every newspaper. Yet her beauty was not typical, and certainly it was not Anglo-Saxon. Her family name is Le Breton, and she came from Jersey. She has the same look that the earlier goddesses of Greece had, and she excites the same feeling that the Greeks ascribed to Cybele and the older gods. Her best likenesses have a strange, familiar, and compelling expression: they seem to speak the universal tongue of the children of men. Her eyes, the set of her head, and the lines of her shoulders express the vital instincts of the race. If Le Breton refers to Brittany, may not Mrs. Langtry trace back to some distant Keltic or pre-Keltic stock that lived at the beginning of things?

To these elemental gifts, add what comes of the habit of society. Before she was an actress, Mrs. Langtry had associated with great ladies, with soldiers and politicians, with artists and poets, and even with the highest in the land. If, as I hinted before, she recalls the antique legends, she is also the cause of some modern fables. Rumour crystallises on eminent personalities. It was said that she had only one dress with which to get through her first London season. That is not true to woman's nature, and it takes no account of our credit system. More consonant with probability and modern manners is the story that people used to hustle and struggle and stand on chairs to see her pass.

Two things are difficult: one is to get an idea into an English head, and the other is to get it out. Before Mrs. Langtry had been twelve months on the stage, the public were assured that she could not act. The public do not judge for themselves: they do not even notice what is under their eyes, and they have gone on believing that Mrs. Langtry cannot act, and, in their hearts, they thought it was a judgment on her for being so beautiful. Surely people do not remember that Mrs. Langtry has been twenty years on the stage, and that any intelligent person can learn a great deal of acting in twenty years. I could mention many professional actors who have improved marvellously in twenty years.

I do not say that Mrs. Langtry is one of our greatest actresses, nor do I think that, in adopting the profession rather late, she was giving herself a fair chance. Moreover, the custom of the stage was against her. A lady having her own company is expected to play leading parts, and leading parts are those which give the playgoer the sensational shock which he regards as the proof of sincerity.

I think that Mrs. Langtry would have been well advised if, from the first, she had devoted herself to the characters that depend upon a keen intelligence and give scope for the comedy of society. Mrs. Langtry brought a great distinction on the stage. She was a lady, and she remained one. I fervently hope this remark will not be construed to the detriment of the other ladies on the stage, for I am void of offence in this matter. But I feel that our English actresses are not as happy as they might be when they represent ladies of society. Miss Ellis Jeffreys promised well, but, alas, she has become self-conscious! Mrs. Langtry has, in such parts, the ease and confidence of a well-bred woman, who is just a trifle *autoritaire* certainly, but not more than becomes a woman of quality.

I find that, in referring to the time Mrs. Langtry has been on the stage, I have not taken into account some rather prolonged intervals when travel and the sport of kings and yachting engaged her attention. Allowing for these periods, her progress has been quicker than I thought. And, perhaps, now that Mrs. Langtry has her own theatre, she will consider the question of playing a comedy of modern life, which should not be either burlesque or a penitential exercise.—THE CANDID FRIEND, August 3rd, 1901. C. G. C.

Mrs Langtry

No. VII.

# MISS ELLEN TERRY.

# Miss Ellen Terry.

IF I had to trace Miss Ellen Terry's ancestry, I should search the parochial registers of the Saga periods. To me, she suggests the heroines of the Sagas reduced to life-size. Her tall figure, her spare form, her ruddy hair, her pale eyes proclaim a Northern breeding. Her free movement, her swift, infrequent gesture, the strong lines of her face all fit with this descent. She is built largely, she has the big limbs of the North, the powerful hands that go with an ample frame. Is this a hard saying? Only because Miss Terry has become the English ideal of tenderness, gaiety, and sweetness. The public did their best to make her an ideal of prettiness. They failed, for Miss Terry breathes an ampler ether and a diviner air. Look at her carefully, watch her action and her walk, and you shall see that strength, not prettiness, is her central quality. This admitted, how is the impression she makes on all audiences, London, country, and American, to be explained?

By the Icelandic parochial registers. If they are not to hand, the Sagas will do as well. I find in them that Miss Terry's Norse ancestors valued other qualities besides strength. And especially in women, they valued the Artemis type, the woman of the light, quick step, the woman of out-of-door life, the woman of the woods and sea-shores. In the Sagas, these women become Valkyrie, but, as a matter of fact, and in real life, they were the housewives of the period. The conditions of that age compelled them to bear fatigue, to hunt, to face the weather. Gradually—see William Morris's prose romances—the type became refined. Sunlocks and Snow-white became the heroines. With them strength takes the form of grace.

The other type—see same authorities—is that expressed in the good fairies. It is a gay, mischievous, high-spirited, capricious type. It delights in disguises, it plays wanton tricks, and it is never so happy as when it is plaguing the serious people with its airy, whimsical humour. Have I got a long way from Miss Terry? Beshrew me if I have! Put that Puck-like spirit into that heroic form, and there is Miss Terry. Strength and energy declare themselves in all her actions. She has more energy than she can use. I have seen her, when she was playing a long part, expend more energy talking—and was it larking?—at the wings than all the rest of the company put together. It is the same in private: the natural flow of a strong temperament.

It is this natural flow that gives her acting its incomparable charm. It informs the wit of Beatrice, the comedy of Letitia Hardy, and the tenderness of Imogen. It has kept Miss Terry young beyond her time. She is said to have the semblance of spontaneousness. I have been so fortunate as to meet Miss Terry often, and I found no semblance. There is no need to attribute deliberation. If an explanation is required, some elementary knowledge of physiology will provide it. A higher nervous sensibility explains this spontaneousness. Miss Terry has the higher organisation in both directions, in receptivity and expressiveness. Her genius, like Browning's, is *primesautier*.

One great advantage she has as an actress: adaptability. And this though she has not the plastic features that suit the stage best. I have a mid-Victorian photograph of her. It seems a veritable Trollopean heroine. That was not a very adaptable sort of young lady; but Miss Terry can look, and be, Camma and Portia and Iolanthe, and make you believe in them. She has another gift, and to a greater degree than any other English actress: the gift of getting *en rapport* with her audience. I do not undervalue Miss Terry as an actress; I do not believe that she owes her success to her unique power of engaging the sympathies of the audience; and, indeed, I am prepared to admit that this gift of sympathy is not personal, but artistic. But I do maintain that no other lady on the stage has it to anything like the same extent. It seems to me that she leaves off acting all of a sudden, and that we are conquered by the shock of her humanity.

This genius for sympathy has placed Miss Terry before and beyond all the actresses of her day. They have had their successes, but they have never got the hold on the affections of the public that she has got. In such matters *vox populi* is *vox Dei*. The instinctive judgment of large masses of men and women is usually right. I believe that the British public have felt the sweetness of Miss Ellen Terry's nature, and, with their ineradicable tendency to prefer the human being to the artist, they have gone beyond the actress and taken the woman to their hearts.—THE CANDID FRIEND, August 10th, 1901.

C. G. C.

Miss Ellen Terry

No. VIII.

# MR. GEORGE ALEXANDER.

# Mr. George Alexander.

THE success of the actor is made by the women. In all civilised communities, the theatre is mainly supported by women, because the drama is, above all other things, emotional. Music is, or can be, emotional; but it is not emotional in the concrete, visible, and life-like manner of the drama. The practical sex demand a present god, and, with their charming capriciousness, they change their gods pretty often. They have remained faithful to Mr. George Alexander with extraordinary constancy.

Mr. Alexander does not owe his success particularly to his physical gifts. He is not *un bellâtre* in face or figure. His strength lies elsewhere. Manly beauty is not the only attraction for women. Personal charm is more effectual, and Mr. Alexander has a personal charm that even men can recognise; but as, in this matter, they cannot be supposed to appreciate it fully, the decision rests with the women, who have given their opinion a long while ago.

However, Mr. Alexander has more important claims for consideration. Next to Sir Henry Irving, he has had the largest and most beneficial influence on the English drama. He is an actor as well as a manager, and I feel bound to say that Mr. Alexander has done much to justify the actor-manager From the first, and up till now, he has had the courage to dare. He possesses a rare union o caution and enterprise. He gave Mr. Oscar Wilde the one indubitable comedy-writer of our day, his first chance; he did the same for Mr. Esmond; and, though Mr. Henry James and Mr. Haddon Chambers had written plays before Mr. Alexander was a manager, he accepted their pieces when other managers fought shy of them.

The most striking instance of Mr. Alexander's foresight and audacity was the production of the "Second Mrs. Tanqueray." The play had been submitted to Mr. John Hare, then the manager of the Garrick Theatre, who refused it. In plain English, he funked it. Probably this astounding decision was due to Mr. Hare not being *au courant* with the tendencies of modern thought. The piece was read to the young manager, who accepted it for production at a series of *matinées;* but, in the end, it came out in the evening, and proved to be a great success.

To this bold policy, Mr. Alexander still adheres, and I think he has shown a greater courage and a greater concern for the interests of the theatre in accepting the plays of Mrs. Craigie than in producing "Mrs. Tanqueray." The only risk in that case was the risk of offending the moral sense of the British public; but with Mrs. Craigie there was the still greater risk of appealing to their intellect. At first sight, the results seem to show that the British public have no moral sense and no intellect. Patriotism recoils from such a conclusion. And if the "Ambassador" and the "Wisdom of the Wise" did not have "phenomenal" runs, they were at all events in the line that English comedy will have to take, if it is to be anything more than a mere pastime.

I am inclined to think that Mr. Alexander is seen to most advantage in those plays of modern life where the characters are supposed to be ladies and gentlemen of breeding and education, whose position gives them familiarity with affairs of state. He has the low tone, the reserve, the ease, and the unassertive dignity that we like to associate with the decorative classes, though Lord Stanley and Lord Hugh Cecil try our faith sorely. And, then, Mr. Alexander can make love with conviction. He does not pretend to be a romantic actor or a tragedian, but he can express a certain modern type of man as no other can, and, of late, he has put both character and humour into his acting.—

THE CANDID FRIEND, August 17th, 1901. C. G. C.

*Wm. George Alexander.*

No. IX.

# MISS LILY HANBURY.

# Miss Lily Hanbury.

IT is not enough to have good looks: it is necessary to have them to yourself. In Hyde Park, at the morning and at the evening service on the Sunday next preceding Ascot, the annual beauty show reaches each year a greater degree of variety. The aim is not merely to be comely or beautiful or pretty, but to be so in a way peculiar to yourself. A form of egotism, no doubt, but egotism or individualism, to give it its nice name, is always with us, and it is sometimes amusing. It does more than amuse, when it produces so many and such delicate varieties of female ingenuity. Every woman in the Park or Ascot crowd has studied herself until she knows how to get the most out of herself, even to the last scruple. The simple divisions of beauty have long been left behind, necessarily sometimes.

With women, as in art, it is the day of the *raffinées*, of the conscious, of the personal, of the advertising. A fashionable crowd recalls the poster-hoarding. Its colours, its movement, the rustle of its muslins, the swaying of its feathers, and the shining of its jewels are only notes and tones and shouts and whispers of our speech. It is a bright and fascinating creature: nervous, eager, restless, and vibrant. Put against that crowd the rich simplicity of the beauty that is not old or young, that is always rare, and is yet common to all times and to all countries, the beauty of Esther, of Nausicaa, and of Breton's "Glâneuse." Make that picture, see that contrast, and you will be on the way to realise the distinction of Miss Hanbury.

I think that everyone must have felt that distinction, or Miss Lily Hanbury's beauty would not have been the only one that has gained universal recognition. Philosophers say that the great truths are self-evident and carry their proof with themselves and are accepted implicitly. It is the same with the universal facts. Man always accepts the perfect expression of human qualities: his preferences are checked in the presence of what is vital and central; he has, no doubt, his private and peculiar gods, but he does service to the racial deity. It is, I am sure, because we feel this racial quality in Miss Hanbury that we speak of her as we speak of those of old, and class her with the women, real or legendary, who for other races and other times have embodied the vital instincts.

Some of Miss Hanbury's success must come from her fortunate difference from prevalent woman. It is not merely that she is tall. That is a matter of heredity and cheap food-stuffs. But Miss Hanbury is not tall in the assertive modern fashion; her height is not the most striking thing about her. In fact, there is nothing striking about Miss Hanbury except herself. The striking quality is popular, but it is a mere device of nature for a particular purpose. Miss Hanbury belongs to classic art, which is Nature at her highest. Miss Hanbury fulfils the classic canon. She has the just proportions which make harmony. None of her gifts outshines the others, none could be altered without spoiling the effect of the whole. Her walk and gestures are in keeping with her looks and figure, and, what is rare, her voice is in accord.

On the stage, Miss Hanbury's appearance has not been in her favour, speaking artistically. The stage is so admirable a means of exhibiting beauty that managers are prone to think it has nothing else to do. They seem to have said to Miss Hanbury, "Be lovely, sweet girl, and let who will be clever." It was a mistake, as Miss Hanbury showed when she was given a part with feeling in it, like that in the "Prisoner of Zenda." She has repeated that success in other parts, and she knows that her strength lies in rendering the strong and simple emotions, and she knows also that these emotions on the stage may lead to melodrama, which audiences greatly love.

At the risk of being thought weak, Miss Hanbury has stopped on the verge of violence: that is the most hopeful sign in her career. It leads me to hope that we shall have in Miss Hanbury an actress, of limited range certainly, but strong and simple and sincere. She has the physique that gives the ideal air to the elemental emotions, and she can control her expression without missing her effects. Hitherto, she has not had full scope, but now that Miss Hanbury is, as they say in the theatre, a leading lady, she will have opportunity. She has experience, she has intelligence, and she is better educated than most leading ladies. Has she the faculty divine? It is so easy to ask questions: it is so rash to answer them. It is best to await the event untrammelled by prophecy.—THE CANDID FRIEND, August 24th, 1901. C. G. C.

Miss Lily Hanbury.

No. X.

# MISS LILY BRAYTON.

# Miss Lily Brayton.

SO long as the theatre is mainly a commercial industry, it must hamper itself by sacrificing, in its women, intelligence to beauty. An actress must be, or seem to be, good-looking. That is the shop-walker idea: the window must be "dressed." Rightly speaking, it is much more important that the actress should have imagination and expression than that she should be beautiful. Obviously, there is no connection between good looks and the capacity for expressing emotion. The two women of our time who have felt most deeply, Charlotte Brontë and George Eliot, would never have been allowed to play leading parts if they had been actresses. I do not see why they should not have been actresses. They would have easily learnt the formal part of the business, and their fiery souls would have preferred the simpler kind of expression. Mrs. Kendal is an actress of talent and experience. Time goes on: Mrs. Kendal is a better actress, but, like other people, Mrs. Kendal has got older. The public do not care for any female character who is supposed to be more than thirty, or, by special licence, thirty-five. So the art of Mrs. Kendal must be wasted or hidden. That comes of putting youth and good looks before everything else.

Quite lately, the public have made the acquaintance of a young actress whose appearance will confirm them in their ridiculously natural opinion. Miss Lily Brayton looked lovely as Viola, and she showed a welcome sympathy with the author's intention. That does not at all affect my position I have not advocated elderly or ill-favoured Violas. Because Miss Brayton, tall, lithe, graceful, and pathetic, pleases me now as Viola, will there be no parts in which she can please me twenty years hence? There is my point. Gather ye rosebuds! Certainly; but how about the roses?

But it is scarcely becoming to treat Miss Brayton as the illustration of an argument. She has a more practical and immediate value, because she is a proof that the English *bourgeois* have nearly outgrown their prejudices against the stage as a career for ladies. Miss Brayton is the daughter of a medical man who practises in a thriving Lancashire town. When Miss Brayton had a holiday last year, she played fine parts in her native town to the delight of her fellow-natives. It is not so long ago that a country doctor whose daughter publicly played Juliet would have lost most of his respectable patients: *e pur si muove!*

Miss Brayton is a convinced romantic, and an ardent Shakespearean. It is delicious to find a young actress who is a sincere idealist, and of Miss Brayton's sincerity I have no doubt. Miss Brayton, speaking of Shakespeare, lets you see the whole of her nature. Whatever emotion is vivid, thrilling, and intense, that emotion Miss Brayton can feel and can express. More exactly, feeling and expression are simultaneous with her. Miss Brayton has singularly sensitive eyes, and their amber irises seem to pulsate, to contract, and expand according to her feelings; and, being Lancashire, she can get a most peculiar tone into her voice, the sort of tone "La Belle sans Merci" used when she was in a good temper. It ought not to be allowed, I am sure; but it must be very useful on the stage.

Miss Brayton disclaims the title of tragedian, but she has the frame and aspect of tragedy. Being young still, and but five years on the stage, she is more apt for pathos. In Desdemona, she must be moving. I do not think she is ripe for human Portia. Comedy is more truthful than tragedy, which is too often an explosion of crude emotion. It means so little: very little more than the same emotion in one of the larger carnivora. A tigress raging with a bullet through her lungs is a tragic and beautiful creature, and suggests Lady Macbeth being played by Miss Brayton. The comparison is, of course, purely æsthetic; but, between ourselves, Miss Brayton's eyes are haunting.—The Candid Friend, August 31st, 1901. C. G. C.

Miss Lily Brayton

No. XI.

# RIGHT HON. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN, M.P.

# The Right Hon. Joseph Chamberlain, M.P.

THERE is an old story about Mr. Chamberlain which must not be allowed to find oblivion. In his early, unregenerate, "ransom" days, he met Lady Dorothy Nevill at one of the few parties to which he had obtained admittance. When he was introduced, she shook her finger at him and exclaimed laughingly:

"You are a very dangerous man, Mr. Chamberlain; but we are not a bit afraid of you, for all the snobs are on our side."

Now, Mr. Chamberlain has always combined, in a remarkable degree, the demagogue and the snob. He was provincial before he became Imperialist; he despised society because it was out of his reach; and his championship of the low was due to the fact that the high seemed so hopelessly inaccessible to him. Anyone with a sufficiently glib tongue and a sufficiently shrewd brain can make himself a democratic power; but, to obtain advancement in the Conservative ranks, it is necessary for a postulent to be servile as well as shrewd and glib, unless, of course, he be a friend or nephew of the Hotel Cecil.

But, with all his faults, Mr. Chamberlain has never stooped to servility. His nature is that of the gadfly rather than of the stinging honey-bee. So his obvious career was Radical, and, had he been handicapped by a conscience or even an idolatry of consistency, he might now have occupied a half-way house between Sir Charles Dilke and Mr. Labouchere. His principles were, however, mere cards in a game of patience. Having secured the long ear of the public by all sorts of extravagant pronouncements, from Republicanism to Socialism, he obtained the patronage, if not the confidence, of Mr. Gladstone, and welcomed the muzzle of office. Then his commercial instincts asserted themselves. The ideal of his youth had been the pushing man who sold more over the counter than his compeers and pouched a larger commission.

His horizon having been expanded by office, he looked for the eventual leadership. Another would have schemed slowly for a reversion. The uprising of Home Rule suddenly shook the foundations of the party system, and he thought he saw his opportunity. He approached Mr. Parnell with a scheme which was to supplant that of Mr. Gladstone. Mr. Parnell liked the scheme, but mistrusted the author. Mr. Gladstone was apprised of the treachery, and Mr. Chamberlain nearly fell between two stools. Gladstonians in secret, and Parnellites on the floor of the House of Commons, muttered the word, "Judas!" He bit his white lips and proclaimed himself a Unionist.

For a time, Mr. Chamberlain seemed banished irrevocably to the cross-benches. But Herr Goschen gave him a lead, and, so soon as Mr. Chamberlain saw that a welcome awaited him, he turned his coat of many colours and went over with his family and familiars to the Conservative ranks. The change was not so great as has been represented. He had already been shrewd enough to detect that Imperialism is popular with the classes who have nothing to lose. After all, it does sound so well in a music-hall. He had merely to pocket his notions about ransom and his insults against aristocrats who neither toil nor spin. His Socialism was not uncongenial to opportunist Conservatives, and he could still plan pauperising schemes for old-age pensions. Moreover, it was a joy to him to give free vent to his innate snobbery. Like every *parvenu*, he loved a lord, and it was balm to his soul when at last he could feel that he had only to say the word to become My Lord Chamberlain.

Troubles in the Transvaal struck him as an opportunity to oust Lord Salisbury, just as troubles in Ireland had inspired him to dish Mr. Gladstone. His commercial calculations represented the Boer Republics as an easy prey, while his ignorance of matters martial blinded him to the strength of the resistance to be overcome. He declared a war which he anticipated would be a mere military promenade. The result was that he and the Empire nearly foundered together. Whether a more sober public temperament will hold him responsible for the disasters which he brought about, or whether the satisfaction of escaping disaster will reconcile England to the light recklessness of this Brummagem Louis Napoleon, remains to be seen.

In any case, his is an interesting temperament to study. He is destitute of human passions: he has never had a friend; love and gratitude are meaningless to him: but these are merely negative passports to greatness. "Small affections and a great soul," said Disraeli, "are an assurance of genius." Mr. Chamberlain's affections are small enough, but his soul is not sufficiently large to assure his career; and I shall be surprised if I do not find that he has already reached the end of his tether.—THE CANDID FRIEND, September 7th, 1901.

HERBERT VIVIAN.

The Right Hon: Joseph Chamberlain. M. P.

No. XII.

# MISS MARIE TEMPEST.

# Miss Marie Tempest.

IN Miss Marie Tempest, whose name by birth was Mary Etherington, and by marriage is now Gordon-Lennox, we find, without contradistinction, one of the best of our English actresses, as well as one of the most finished singers of light opera our country has produced. Of small stature, somewhat irregular features, rendered almost beautiful by a pair of magnificent eyes and a well-shaped mouth filled with perfect teeth, and of a lovely and powerful, well-trained voice, Miss Marie Tempest, for many years, occupied the position of absolute queen in her particular line of art. The "Geisha" was, perhaps, her greatest success, but in the "Greek Slave" she showed signs of latent dramatic talent of a far higher order than any which she had so far given to the public. Her marriage, in 1898, with Mr. Cosmo Lennox, himself an actor from sheer love of the Thespian art (for he enjoys a large private fortune), made her turn her thoughts to entering the more serious ranks of theatrical performers. Finally, her engagement to play the boy-girl part in that very successful, but essentially trivial, piece, "San Toy," disgusted her so thoroughly with burlesque operetta that she resolved to devote herself entirely to comedy and the drama.

Her first essay in this new line was the part of Nell Gwyn in "English Nell," which play, after a most successful run in London, has had an equally successful tour through those many theatres which now surround the Metropolis, and give the inhabitants of Brixton, Fulham, Clapham, and the other suburbs an opportunity of seeing the best and newest pieces admirably acted and staged close to their own doors.

Miss Tempest's next effort was to take the part of Peg Woffington, in "Masks and Faces." For some reason or other, this comedy was not a success; it was admirably staged, the dresses were correct and pretty, the cast was decidedly above the average, but it did not go down with the capricious British public. Personally, I thought the rendering of the character of the impulsive, generous, and wayward Peg a miracle of art: but the play, no doubt, is stagey and old-fashioned.

Now, Miss Tempest has started on a more ambitious role, and, as the heroine of Thackeray's masterpiece, she has ample scope for displaying her great talents: her wit, her humour, her power of expressing the artifices of an intriguing, clever woman; and also for giving a short specimen of her great vocal powers.

Mrs. Lennox was educated in an Ursuline convent in Belgium and also at a convent in Paris, and she speaks French as well as she does English. She had a tremendous success when she made a tour in America, and no English singer has ever been more applauded in the United States. Her husband, Mr. Cosmo Lennox, who acts under the name of Stewart, is the only son of Lord and Lady Alexander Lennox. From his mother, who was one of the heiresses of the Townley Estate, he has inherited a very considerable fortune, but his natural inclinations and great taste for the drama have led him to adopt the theatrical profession, and he has worked as hard and conscientiously through the drudgery incidental to the commencement of a theatrical career as could the most struggling and friendless player. His reward has been that he is now a finished comedian, and is quite admirable in certain parts, particularly gentlemanly characters in light comedy.

Mr. and Mrs. Gordon-Lennox have a charming house in Regent's Park Terrace, just at the end of Portland Place. It is a fine mansion, and furnished with taste and skill. They are both so much occupied by their theatrical pursuits as to have little time for social avocations except on Sunday. By a tacit arrangement, Mr. and Mrs. Lennox never act at the same theatre: a wise resolution which many of our married actors and actresses would do well to adopt. They are a devoted and affectionate couple, and the marriage has proved in every sense a success. Mrs. Lennox is one of the best-dressed women in London, either on or off the stage: she is always smart, neat, and attired in the latest fashion, without exaggeration and in the most perfect taste, and yet I know for a fact that everything, or almost everything, she wears is made in London. No one better understands the art of *coiffure* than she, and her beautiful and abundant hair is one of her greatest charms. In private society, her conversation is amusing and sprightly, and she is a delightful companion and an excellent hostess.—THE CANDID FRIEND, September 14th, 1901.

J. R. L.

Photograph. Study by Pirsch

Miss Marie Tempest.

No. XIII.

# MR. LEWIS WALLER.

# Mr. Lewis Waller.

BORN in the Basque Provinces of Spain, Mr. Lewis Waller is for doublet and hose, with the frank expression of emotions which those accessories supply. His manner is infected with the stately grace of the hidalgo, dashed with the flamboyancy of the Jew. And from this admixture of races spring the irresistible gallantry, the swashing energy, which sweep on the action of a romance to its fitting climax. To this same intermingling of bloods we must turn, too, for an explanation of his defects, defects which limit his range of parts and leave him a disciple of John Philip Kemble, where style and inclination would have him follow in Fechter's footsteps.

For there is no denying the coldness of Mr. Waller's stage temperament. Try as he may to infuse the parts he plays with the warmth of his native Spain, he can but achieve the frigidity of the North. His acting has the clear-cut precision of the features on an Iberian coin; but it never vibrates with the passion of a man in love. A classic grace is in his every movement, and infects each sense with coldness, almost harshness. He becomes a masculine Galatea, waiting the kindling touch of his Pygmalion: beautiful to gaze upon, but statuesque. It is only in two respects, however, that this marmorean quality comes uppermost: in comedy and in scenes of tenderness.

Falstaff in love hardly presents a more pitiable spectacle than does Mr. Waller in humorous passages. On the stage, he seems, by temperament, what Rabelais would call an agelast, a non-laugher; by training, an hypergelast, one who will respond to a grimace as readily as the clapper of a bell answers to every breeze. And to laugh at everything is, as Mr. Meredith reminds us, "to have no appreciation of the Comic of Comedy." It is for this reason that Mr. Waller's Falconbridge fell flat, and the raillery of Henry V.'s suit to Cousin Kate left one writhing. For the same reason, his Hotspur remains his finest achievement. There he might ramp and roar to his heart's content, and, be it admitted, he did it superbly, and with a vibrant energy which no living actor could excel.

Love-making in earnest is equally alien to Mr. Waller's temperament. He goes through it resolutely enough, as an inexperienced horseman will crash through a fence. But he is apt to arrive on the other side breathless, disordered, and generally in a state of bewilderment. His bearing is irreproachable, his voice carefully modulated to each shade of emotion; but a very little discernment will show that art, not heart, is his inspiration. This disability contributes, however, to his success as the ideal hero of romance. Lovable in himself, it is inexpedient that he should be in love. But give him a horse, a sword, and a battle-field; and he will show you a man. At such times, Mr. Waller's art is sincere and admirable. Fire gleams in his eyes, passion vibrates in his voice, which rings clarion-clear above a tumult.

This limitation becomes more defined in management. Modern plays are irksome to his spirit, and, in eschewing them, Mr. Waller is necessarily harried from Shakespeare to the rag-bag of the French romanticism of the fifties, or the demi-semi-imaginativeness of Mr. Hall Caine and Miss Marie Corelli. His policy is not exactly ambitious; but, so long as the material lasts, it is bound to be popular. When the supply fails, as soon it must, his difficulties will begin. How will he meet them? He is still young enough to attain to proficiency in the qualities which nature has denied him. But "youth's a stuff will not endure." And, with the fading of that, he may conceivably become deaf to the call of action, and incompetent to respond to less simple demands.—THE CANDID FRIEND, September 21st, 1901. R. G. B.

*Wm Lloyd Walker*

No. XIV.

# MR. ARTHUR ROBERTS.

# Mr. Arthur Roberts.

THOUGH our language is precise, as well as copious, we are too much in a hurry to use it with exactness, and we speak so loosely that some words are now used to express the opposite of their right meaning. "Avocation" and "restive" are in the dictionaries for just the very things they do not mean. It is on this principle that Mr. Arthur Roberts is called an actor.

Strictly speaking, Mr. Arthur Roberts is not an actor: he is a droll. There are many kinds of drolls, Mr. Roberts belongs to the lively class. He has a quick eye for the comic superficialities of human nature, and a singular felicity in reproducing them. Dickens was called the photographer of the street: Mr. Roberts is the man who goes about making snapshots of the scenes of the race-course, the railway carriage, and the public-house. He is a lightning artist, who, in a few bold, swift strokes, reproduces the characters of a friendly talk, of an altercation, or of a domestic crisis. He has studied the London gutter, as Zola has studied the streets of Paris. His gutter-people are not all the same. Their speech is not always smart and chippy: sometimes it is thickened and dull and drawling. Their gestures is often alarming; but sometimes it is a mere suggestion, as gesture becomes when it is a habit.

Mr. Roberts is a short, dark, spare gentleman, brisk in movement, dapper in figure. His speech is *staccato* and emphatic, and his facial expression so rapid that it seems to be beyond his control. The likeness between Mr. Arthur Roberts and Mr. John Hare is remarkable; but, seeing that both belong to the race which has produced the poetry of Job and the finance of Barney Barnato, it cannot be called miraculous. Both are interested in the improvement of the English thoroughbred, and it is said that Mr. Roberts, at a race meeting, was once offered Mr. Hare's winnings, a temptation which he nobly withstood. The story goes on to tell of the indignation of the bookmaker when Mr. Hare applied for the money, and of his refusal to settle until the two Dromios appeared before him. No one could tell this story better than Mr. Roberts, and, if it is new to him, it is entirely at his service: if he will introduce it into "H.M.S. 'Irresponsible,'" I shall be glad to see him represent all the characters in it.

Mr. Roberts was not intended for any of the learned professions. He is said to have been in a lawyer's office, and in the Railway Clearing House, and honorary assistant to an outside broker. It is possible that he has been all three, and others besides. The amazing variety of his knowledge and the recondite sources of his metaphors can be accounted for only by a strange experience and a Shakespearean retentiveness of impressions. He is famous for the readiness of his "gags," and his victories over the fellow-comedians who have provoked him to battle. The most famous of these encounters took place at the Avenue Theatre, when young Arthur Roberts was getting to be more liked than an older actor in the company: Mr. Lionel Brough. Mr. Brough is said to have collected "gags," old and new, and to have exploded them on Roberts, who was taken by surprise. Mr. Brough's triumph lasted for one scene. For the rest of the piece, Mr. Roberts had it all his own way, and, to the delight of the audience, he "gagged" his rival into silence. I believe he interrupted the dramatic sequence of the action; but 'twas a glorious victory, and still remembered by everyone concerned.

In that case, Mr. Roberts was brilliant; in another, he was deliciously amusing. He does not profess to be a regular actor, and yet he has had his ambition. It led him to accept an engagement to play an ordinary human being. The piece was Mr. Sydney Grundy's "Silver Shield"; the audience were largely theatrical, and, when they saw Mr. Roberts acting seriously, they were torn with inward laughter. It was not all inward: some was visible, and some was audible. Mr. Roberts became more and more serious, and the audience became more and more obstreperous. Truly, it was a lovely performance, and not a bit like anything either in the heavens above or on the earth below. It was grotesque, ludicrous, and inconceivable, and Mr. Roberts was quite convinced that he was acting as such a man in such circumstances would act. He was mistaken; but he was very funny. I wish he would play that part again.—

THE CANDID FRIEND, September 28th, 1901. C. G. C.

Wm. Arthur Roberts.

No. XV.

# MR. WILLIAM GILLETTE.

# Mr. William Gillette.

IO SONO IO! Magda's passionate defence of her individuality rouses an echo in the hearts of all artists. It is their birthright, this insistence on the *ego* as the ultimate goal of their ambitions. And yet how few preserve it! The supplanter is always waiting for their hungry hour, the mess of pottage extended with brotherly solicitude. Then a momentary struggle ensues: the insidious odours prove irresistible, and another individual is swallowed up in the throng. This is particularly the case with actors. Let one of them venture to stand aloof from his fellows, and he is promptly assailed with open taunts and covert sneers. Hazlitt whispers in his ear that his very thoughts are not his own. Mr. Augustine Birrell condoles contemptuously with him on the necessity, which the stage imposes, of destroying his identity. Small wonder that actors, as a class, have grown to the likeness in which they are painted: "train-bearers in the pageant of life."

In all times, however, the stage has provided a few great artists: men and women who indue characters with their own individuality, instead of subordinating it to them. And, among such, Mr. Gillette is pre-eminent. He is, in fact, the male of Duse. And with him, as with her, "action, in the actor, is a way of spoiling something." His greatest moments are those of intense quiet. His appeal is never through the conscious rhetoric of the actor posturing in the limelight. Rather does he inform a scene with reticence, with unconsciousness. Yet this seeming inaction is delusive: his dreaminess is merely a mask, behind which he is acting with every nerve and keeping the nerves of his audience a-quiver with expectation. For this reason, his protracted silences are more expressive than the speech of another. One is conscious, all the while, of great powers brought to bear upon the problem in hand, sure that the right solution will be found. Apostle of the doctrine of reserved force, he triumphs where his many disciples fail. His reserve always suggests a latent strength. It never veils impotence and superficiality.

Off the stage, Mr. Gillette is exactly the same. Coldly impassive in manner, with an inscrutable face and eyes, whose apparent apathy but conceals a piercing scrutiny, he is Sherlock Holmes to the life. A man of few words, he gives no confidences, yet wins them at will. The interview is tabooed by him. His views on Ibsen and the hundred-and-one kindred topics on which interviewers babble with damnable iteration—their custom, as one may say, always of the afternoon—remain unchronicled. Taciturn to an eccentric degree, he will not waste time in prating about art after the manner of his kind. He may have ideals on the subject—who shall determine, when he is silent?—but, while others are talking, he has realised them. Nonchalant, not to say languid, in manner, and never seeming to work, he is perpetually thinking out the details of a play or perfecting some new scheme for lighting the stage. In the entire absence of haste which marks all his movements, however, he bears less resemblance to the febrile Duse than to Lord Kitchener.

Nor is this analogy so far-fetched as it may appear at first sight. Both men are born generals, with a genius for getting the best work out of those under their command; and in both, too, taciturnity rather intensifies than conceals an inflexible will, a dogged tenacity of purpose. No difficulty is too great to be overcome by them; no failure irretrievable. In the hey-day of his dramatist's career, Mr. Gillette wrote a huge spectacular play, called "Ninety Days," and invested every penny of his fortune in its production. The venture failed hopelessly. Not so Mr. Gillette. After a desperate illness, he set to work, wrote "Too Much Johnson," and retrieved his losses at one throw. Again, when he had just completed "Sherlock Holmes," a fire broke out in his hotel and the theatre at Boston. The MS., of which no copy had been made, was burned to ashes, together with the scenery for "Secret Service." Yet the news left him unmoved. Turning lazily in bed in the hotel to which he had removed, he said to his informant, in his inimitable, uninterested way:

"Say, is there any danger of this hotel burning?"

Receiving a negative answer, he added:

"Then come and tell me all about it in the morning!"

And, turning his back, he fell asleep. The next day he restarted work, and, by a prodigious effort of memory, dictated the entire play in a fortnight!

The greatest artist that has crossed the Atlantic to act, Mr. Gillette is also one of the few really distinguished dramatists of the day. In "Secret Service," bigness of conception was rivalled by meticulousness in execution, fertility of invention by the sobriety and delicacy of the writing, which exalted the play from the ruck of melodrama to the realms of literature. If these qualities are not so marked in "Sherlock Holmes," it is scarcely a matter for surprise. Considering the subject, it is wonderful that they exist at all. But, at least, it offers decisive proof of Mr. Gillette's consummate *technique*, his eclecticism, originality, and subtle skill in suggestion as an alternative to, and improvement on, full execution.—The Candid Friend, October 5th, 1901.

R. G. B.

Photographed from life by Pach

Photogravure

Hon. William Gillette

No. XVI.

# MR. FRED TERRY.

# Mr. Fred Terry.

"FRED TERRY": the very name has a pleasant flavour, as of one who has endeared himself without effort, merely by existing, to a whole people. Partly, of course, it is the family name which has so delightful a ring. Associations have been built up around it from generation to generation, until it has become a sort of national possession. The English stage has, time out of mind, had its Terrys; and they were always distinguished. If a catastrophe were to wipe them out now, the contemporary theatre would suffer a loss which nothing could make good. Think of the glamour surrounding Ellen Terry. The meaner beauties of the night arise, flash their hour or so, and vanish into limbo; but Ellen Terry, both for what she was and what she still is, remains fixed and immovable: the bright, particular star. The gracious Marion is her only possible rival, and there are thousands of playgoers for whom the theatre has lost much of its savour because this queen-like and beautiful artist so seldom graces it. Older playgoers have delightful recollections of Kate Terry's art; but she sacrificed the artistic career for domestic happiness too early for the present generation; and we can only murmur, "*Mater pulchra, filia pulchrior*," as we watch the radiant dawn of her daughter, Mabel Terry-Lewis.

And in this hierarchy Fred—it is impossible to think of him as Frederick—holds a high, at the present moment, perhaps, the highest, place. His career has been full of instruction to the young actor. Nobody beat a drum or blew a trumpet when he first appeared. He was not the darling of Bayswater drawing-rooms. He did not come to the stage with the reputation of being the victim of the morphia-habit. He was not "discovered" by the Ibsenites, nor by Mr. Bernard Shaw, nor by Mr. Grein, nor by Mr. Archer. He was not even a co-respondent. He just went through the mill. His personality was undeveloped. He was all legs and arms. He caracoled through his parts like a colt on the greensward, and your first instinct was to put the chimney-ornaments in a safe place. But he had the nameless Terry charm and Terry magnetism; he worked; with infinite labour, he got his limbs under control: and, now, where will you look for a better actor? For, mark you, he is not merely a personality, but an impersonator. He does not make his own face his entire fortune, as other actors do, until we are sick and weary of their familiar and futile features. He is an adept at disguise, as his Charles the Second sufficiently shows.

He is manly, without having to carry golf-clubs about to prove it; sensitive, without mawkishness; and, on the stage, heroic, without bluster. He has the most equable temper of any actor; and there is nothing he hates more cordially than strong language. In a word, whether on or off the stage, he is always distinguished.

It is good to think that such a man, and such an actor, is at last seated in management under conditions which promise stability. I believe that I am justified in saying that there is no syndicate of Jews, nor even of Americans, behind Messrs. Terry and Legge, to import undesirable females, or climb out at the first failure. Nor has he, like too many other actor-managers, married a lady who cannot act, but who insists on leading. He married Miss Julia Neilson; and, if there is a more promising combination anywhere than Fred Terry and Julia Neilson, I should very much like to know where it is.

Playgoers have every reason to look to the Globe Theatre for great things in the future. True, there is no accredited puffer on the premises to fill the gaping columns of a hospitable press with apocalyptic prophecies. We are not asked to fall into paralysis because Mr. and Mrs. Terry have gone to spend a week-end at Margate: indeed, the most intimate event may happen in their domestic circle, and no word said. This is very remarkable. Here is a young theatrical couple whose private lives are actually private, and who can sup at the Carlton without describing themselves as leaders of society. Half-penny papers, please notice.

I have great hopes of Mr. Terry. He is already popular. He has done much excellent work, but he has not, by any means, exhausted his possibilities. He is still, to a great extent, a dark horse, for the simple reason that a really extraordinary part has not yet come his way. When it does, I shall be very much surprised if he does not surprise us.—THE CANDID FRIEND, October 12th, 1901.

J. A. L.

Photographic Study by Hustel — Direct Photo Engraving

Mr. Fred Terry

No. XVII.

# MR. H. B. IRVING.

# Mr. H. B. Irving.

MR. HARRY IRVING, within ten years of his *début*, has established a reputation whose growth is watched with the keenest interest and an enthusiasm engendered by conviction. He is tacitly admitted to be one of the few "coming men," men whose achievements mark them off from the general and are the index to futurity. Yet he has contrived this in despite, rather than because of, his circumstances. The son of his father, he has, perhaps, inevitably found his heritage less of an advantage than a stumbling-block in his career. With the best will in the world, dramatic criticism could not away with the father's masterly deeds in dealing with the son's early efforts, oblivious, apparently, of Sir Henry's own tedious apprenticeship to the art from which his name is inseparable.

Thus, when he began, appropriately enough, with "School," the note of criticism was parrot-like and petty. He was condemned on every side for his stilted manner and his *gaucherie;* but the criticism, though just in itself, was shallow. It argued a lack of discernment in the critics. The part was old-fashioned, the actor new: facts lending truth to the proverb which decrees broken glass as the sequel to pouring new wine into old bottles. Even thus early, however, it was apparent to the observant that Mr. Irving was destined to carve out a career for himself worthy of the great name he bore. He had a handsome face, a flexible figure, a resonant voice, singular, interesting earnestness, and, above all, personal magnetism. He was already, in fact, a personality, with a distinctive manner and a strongly-developed tendency towards the romantic. The immaculately-dressed heroes of tailor-made drama were, evidently, not his mark. He had inherited his father's taste for the flamboyant.

For this reason, Mr. Irving was taken to task for the lack of discipline in Echegaray's "Mariana." Yet this defect was more valuable than the qualities of half the actors who, in the shibboleth of criticism, are "superb" at playing themselves. It suggested an actor who was willing to spurn dialectics and give free play to his imagination; in whom the fire of passion burned brightly, ready to dart into flame on the instant: one, indeed, who added knowledge to observation, intensity to insight, subtlety to strength. Such an equipment brings its reward in due season, and there is every indication that, in spite of his youth, Harry Irving is already within sight of his goal.

The dominating factor in his success has been hard and unremitting work. Personality and a charm of manner which can only be termed Irvingesque have helped, no doubt; but, before all, must be set work. Nothing has ever come amiss to him. When others took their "well-earned holidays," he joined touring companies, playing Shakespeare, Bulwer Lytton, Sheridan, and Sheridan Knowles at the rate of seven new parts a week, and gaining experience. Nor must his studies in criminology and his sporadic appearances in the more serious reviews be overlooked. Some have traced in them a dangerous tendency to diffuseness of aim, and, murmuring that no man can serve two goddesses, have besought Mr. Irving to choose speedily between literature and the stage. I think they were over-hasty in their conclusions. Mr. Irving's digressions are, in reality, helpful to his stage career. They have enlarged his vision by fixing his attention on the world which exists outside the circumscribed atmosphere of the theatre, and in which human characters live, and move, and have their being. They have taught him to differentiate between real people and hackneyed stage types; and the gain to the stage is one which cannot be reckoned lightly.—THE CANDID FRIEND, October 19th, 1901. R. G. B.

W. M. R. Irving

No. XVIII.

# HERR JAN KUBELIK.

# Herr Jan Kubelik.

AT a very smart party in Grosvenor Place, during the season, a lady was overheard talking as follows to the hostess. She had just received the programme of music, and, as she looked down it, she gave a little start:

"Oh! Kubelik," she exclaimed. "How delightful! I have heard so much about Kubelik. But what is it? Is it a new game? A kind of ping-pong, I suppose."

Such is fame! And yet one would have imagined that there could not have been a person in London who had not heard about Kubelik and knew all there was to know about his marvellous career. London is indeed the most extraordinary place in the world. Here you will meet the most learned, the most up-to-date, the most frivolous, the most solemn, and the most profoundly ignorant, all in the same room.

Kubelik is only twenty-one years of age, and he has already developed into the greatest musical lion of the day. Moreover, his success is not merely a *succès d'estime:* it is literally a *succès fou*. He will not play anywhere for less than £300, and he has frequently received very much larger fees than that during the season. Often he has had several engagements in one evening. He is simply coining money. His is not the musical genius that starves in a garret. By a sudden bound, he has leapt into the forefront of his profession. I am told that he is about to undertake a *tournée*, as it is called, for which he will receive £80,000. This fortune is sometimes the reward of a lifetime of struggle and hard work; but Kubelik has scarcely emerged from his teens, and he is going to make this sum in the course of a few months, while waiting for the next London season to commence. We are promised an opportunity of hearing him in England before he starts on his tour, which is to include America.

That Kubelik plays divinely is, of course, universally admitted. He combines with a *technique* which can only be described as marvellous an individuality which is more than precocious. He plays, too, with an *abandon* which shows the artist. As one watches him, one feels that he has forgotten his audience: that his mind is far away, and his soul wrapped in his music. It is pathetic to see how the prodigy is guarded and protected from the vulgar, mundane crowd. At the parties that he goes to, he never touches any refreshments. Nobody is allowed to carry his violin; he has his own accompanist and his own piano. A monarch could not show a higher or more royal sense of dignity. Yet he is a charming, unsophisticated person, absolutely unspoilt by the homage that is paid him.

There is a touch of pathos about his career too. Born in a little village near Prague, he had for father a humble peasant, who was also a fiddler: just an ordinary village fiddler, who used to play at rustic feasts. This father taught his boy to play; but the pupil soon outstripped his master. The parent saw that the fates had sent him a genius. To provide a fitting musical education for that genius, to send him to the Prague Conservatorium, where he would have Seveik, that famous trainer of geniuses, for his master, the poor father pinched and, maybe, starved himself. But he was not destined to see the fruits of his unselfishness: he died just before the boy he had scraped and slaved for made his first success. Midst all the glamour of his present dazzling position, this darling of society, this heaven-born genius of his profession must often feel a lump at his throat when he thinks that his father, whose loving labour made it possible for him to become what he is, is not here to share his glory and his wealth with him. Life is full of cruel ironies.—THE CANDID FRIEND, October 26th, 1901. F. F.

*Herr Jan Kubelik.*

No. XIX.

# H.R.H. THE DUCHESS OF CORNWALL AND YORK.

# H.R.H. the Duchess of Cornwall and York.

ON Saturday, H.R.H. the Duchess of Cornwall and York will be back in the land of which one day, we hope, she will be Queen. To her it will be a day *albo notanda lapillo*, for, of all the welcomes which may be shouted to her during her life, none will ring more truly than that which will go up then from the thousands of citizens lining the streets of London: the last chord of the harmony of acclamation to which she has listened in so many places beyond the seas.

She has worked hard—this tour was not all play even for her—and, doubtless, she will be glad to rest for a time in an English country-house. The more so as she was educated in the simplest manner, and, since her marriage, has never known much of public life. She and her husband are the most English members of our Royal Family; the outland characteristics of his forefathers do not appear in him, and Princess May was a Richmond girl *in excelsis*.

Her early life was spent in an atmosphere of happiness and well-doing, created by the really beautiful nature of her mother, the Duchess of Teck, a gracious lady who was loved by all who knew her. Her father, who had great knowledge of the etiquettes and exigencies of Court-life, moulded her youth to the possible demands of a later career. And so she became a woman and a princess under the best of auspices.

Her betrothal to the Duke of Clarence gave real satisfaction to the nation, which had always feared the introduction into the succession-line of more foreign blood. When that unfortunate Prince came to his early death, the people of England suffered more in sympathy with their Princess May than with those to whom his loss was a greater pain. So is it always with the crowd, short-sighted sentimentalist as it is. The man-in-the-street only understood that it meant another king and, so far as it was possible to see, another queen for his children. There was another king available, a better one, perhaps, but where another Princess May to be Queen?

Relying on this feeling of the people, it was decided to marry her to the Duke of York so soon as a decent period of mourning had passed by. A bold policy this, which came near to being wrecked by that very sentimentalism on whose waters it was expected to float so bravely. It was saved, however, by the romantic story of her early love for Prince George, which was propagated cleverly in the country. Happily, it was true; and, when this was understood fully, nervousness gave way to a satisfaction which grew rapidly into rejoicing.

The wedding took place in the capital, with all the pomp of tawdrily-decorated streets which characterises such functions in England. The men shouted, "Hurrah!" and the women, "God bless them!" Everybody was pleased, from their royal relations to the *commères* of the back streets. The Fates also gave their approval, for, in due time, an heir was born to them and the succession assured.

The Duchess has improved greatly since her marriage, which has worn down many of the roughnesses of her nature. She is quick of temper in a healthy, volcanic way, but ill-will has no place in her character. There is nothing complex in her: indeed, she is unimaginative, and a little slow. It would be better, perhaps, if she were a little more exacting in matters of etiquette, more aloof, less prodigal of her friendship. Her Royal Highness, if not a beautiful woman, has one of the kindest and most attractive of faces, and her popularity with the lieges, whether as Princess of Wales, as she soon will be, or as Queen, will never be in doubt.—THE CANDID FRIEND, November 2nd, 1901. J. S. H.

No. XX.

# MR. HERBERT WARING.

# Mr. Herbert Waring.

THERE is much wild talk of intellectual and scholarly actors, and the epileptic paragraphist frequently applies the terms to men who are quite unintellectual and have no scholarship whatever. As a general rule, that actor is called scholarly who has just sense enough to know there is such a thing as scholarship somewhere, and a sufficiently fat cheque-book to enable him to hire it into his service. Great reputations have even been established by the timely acquisition of a cheap encyclopædia.

But Mr. Waring is a scholar. He was once, we are told, a schoolmaster. More than that: he was himself properly educated. You cannot be an alumnus of Dulwich College and Merchant Taylors' but some of the humaner letters will linger about you like a pleasant aroma. In moments of excitement, he has been known to quote Horace. Also he is a boating-man, a sound cricketer, and a sane golfer: all which things make for righteousness. He speaks better English than any actor on the stage. At a time when, owing to the fatal example set by persons who should know better, it has become a painful and laborious exercise to understand one half of what actors and actresses say, and when that half is disfigured by a horrible Americanism in tone and pronunciation, it is a great delight to listen to a man whose diction is a well of English undefiled. If ever that famous School of Acting which we hear so much about be established, Mr. Waring should be installed in the Chair of the Vulgar Tongue.

A modest man—too modest to labour at his own advancement with that effrontery which characterises many of his contemporaries of the stage—he goes quietly about his business, disdaining the rank and blatant advertisement by which other men hoist themselves into temporary notoriety. He loves his work, yet does not talk about Art with a capital A. He is, in short, one of the soundest, most conscientious, and most satisfying actors at present before the public.

He has done some very notable things. It is to be remarked that the more difficult and complex a part is, the finer is his performance. That is why he is the only English actor who has ever enabled a British audience to understand an Ibsen part. So far, perhaps, the Master-builder may stand as the high-water mark of his achievement; and I am not aware of any other living artist who could have illustrated Ibsen's master-piece with such complete sympathy, such clear insight, or expressed it for the comprehension of an average audience with such perfect mastery of technical means.

A curious fate has befallen most of the actors and actresses who went up like rockets on the coat-tails of Ibsen: they have come down again; they have gone under; they are practically lost to the stage; they are now living on the bones of a reputation too suddenly made at a Vaudeville *matinée*, and on the praise of furtive clubs hidden up blind-alleys. Not so Mr. Waring. His mind is healthy enough to save him from making Ibsen and morphia convertible terms; healthy enough, also, to realise that an actor's greatness—if such a thing there be—is not made by the voice of a coterie, but by the goodwill of the public at large.

Mr. Waring, then, is the actor of all others who can do most justice to subtle character-parts. The late craze for the Wardour Street drama has doomed him to the mock-romantic; and, although, in this, as in everything else, he is conscientious and thorough, we have had to deplore a waste of talent. Anybody can put on a curly wig and say, "Gadzooks!" and "By my halidame!" but not anybody can represent the modern man pulled hither and thither by a thousand-and-one whims, passions, and emotions as he could, if he had the chance. If only we had a dramatist with insight, he would hasten to construct such a part for Mr. Waring, and we should see a great performance.

In the meantime, I understand that he is looking for a play: a hopeless quest, I fear; for no one writes plays now, but only knocks together dramatic versions of six-shilling novels, which are not worth a farthing. Let him do the bold thing: let him give us Hamlet. Not so very bold a thing, either, for his own nature would be greatly in favour of a fine conception of the moody Dane. There is a good deal of Hamlet about Mr. Waring. He, also, is troubled in his mind about the Why and the How. He, also, is, at times, pleasingly melancholy; and, although he does not, so far as I am aware, indulge in soliloquies, or see ghosts on more remote platforms, his face, his voice, his gestures, are all curiously Hamletish. Moreover, it would be a great and startlingly novel experience to hear Shakespeare's words spoken purely, with proper emphasis, without any affectation, by a scholar and a gentleman.—THE CANDID FRIEND, November 2nd, 1901.

J. A. L.

Photogravure Study by Kistler

Mr Herbert Harvey

No. XXI.

# MR. WEEDON GROSSMITH.

# Mr. Weedon Grossmith.

ONE of the minor, but by no means the least exasperating, drawbacks of the "long-run" system is its tendency to hide from the play-goer the determining bent, the real quiddity, of the player. In the old times, wherein a *répertoire* was exposed, you could assure yourself of a promising actor's particular talent in a few months' space. Nowadays, you may deem yourself strangely lucky, or wonderfully perspicacious, if you manage to settle the question within the limits of as many years. An actor who plays the same character week in and week out for a year necessarily becomes associated with that character in the public mind. And, as he finds one original and successful part procuring for him half-a-dozen inferior and imitative parts, as he is no longer expected to assume in succession the great classical roles of tragedy or of comedy, he may very well discover himself growing old, or middle-aged, before he finds an opportunity of exhibiting a proper notion of his powers.

Under this curse of vain repetition, few actors have suffered more than Mr. Weedon Grossmith. A real character-actor, and not, like Mr. Edward Terry, a mere superior "droll," Mr. Grossmith is probably regarded by most play-goers as only "a funny little man." He is well remembered as the talented amateur of "A Pantomime Rehearsal," and as the "Vice-Versa"-like hero of the "New Boy." He is vaguely remembered as the dapper little Cockney, whose imperturbable cheek and exaggerated despair have given a measure of life to a score of ephemeral farces. And his real talent he has allowed, until quite recent years, to remain buried under a bushel, hidden from all, save the few who saw him play the sneaking pick-pocket in "Robert Macaire," the art-loving valet in "A Commission," and the lying hotel-waiter in "Faithful James." For one of the crying evils of the present theatrical system lies in the fact that the comedian who makes a hit in a really live part is immediately snapped up by some commercial syndicate and condemned to appear in a long line of silly farces. In passing from the "b'y at 'eart" and from the "Man in the Street" to rough-and-tumble comedy, Mr. Welch is only experiencing the fate of Mr. Grossmith, whose Hebrew money-lender and social-purity fanatic have been wiped clean from the memory of most play-goers by a series of "Other Fellows," "New Boys," and "Mr. Pottons."

To tell the plain, unvarnished truth, Mr. Weedon Grossmith is never quite convincing when he plays the simple or the amorous ass. The standard of geniality required in the performance of this part, a standard which Mr. Wyndham used to screw up high, and which Mr. Hawtrey has eased only a very little, has to be relaxed altogether when Mr. Grossmith goes on the spree. For Mr. Grossmith lacks glow and charm of manner: his temperament strikes one as being saturnine rather than jovial; and he is always seen at his best where his keen features and his acute observation enable him to present a realistic study of some member of the slinking or of the servile class. A cringing, but pushing, little Jew; a quiet-spoken, yet irreconcilable, "Vigilant"; an obsequious, yet insolent, waiter; a febrile, cowardly thief; a deferential, blackmailing valet; a shop-walker who yearns to be treated as "a brother and a man": all these types he depicts with marvellous detail and in clearest-cut outline. His Faithful James is the *noümenal* waiter; his Crosbie has been styled "the quintessence of valetdom"; his Jack Sheppard is Jonathan Wild's victim come to life again. What a Morgan he would make, if he could but persuade Mr. Hare to play Major Pendennis!

Yet Mr. Grossmith's art, incisive and definite as it is, has the signal defects of its qualities. It lacks in range and in extension what it possesses in distinction and in vitality. And the probability is that it will never transcend the impersonation of the City clerk or of the Cockney servant. His immobile, determined features seem destined to prevent Mr. Grossmith from following Mr. Hare in low comedy or in old men's parts. And a temperamental aversion from "other-worldliness," and an inclination towards the actual and the matter-of-fact will, I fancy, deter him from making such "sentimental studies" as Mr. Maude so charmingly affords. Mr. Grossmith can render as good an account of a tattler, of a "crank," or of a noxious little cad, as that given by Mr. Maude—have not both actors played Sir Benjamin Backbite and the "crusading" Mr. Palsam?—and, like Mr. Maude, he can also attain to a certain degree of nervous intensity. But an inflexibility of tone, of manner, and of sympathy will always hamper him in the execution of higher, or of more emotional, work. His *métier* is to represent knaves and fools, and that great class, half dupers and half dupes, which hovers between knavery and folly.—THE CANDID FRIEND, November 16th, 1901.

W. A. L. B.

*W. Worden Grossmith*

No. XXII.

# MISS DOROTHEA BAIRD.

# Miss Dorothea Baird.

"WHAT songs the syrens sang, or what name Achilles assumed when he hid himself among women, though puzzling questions, are not beyond all conjecture." But which of two actresses shall succeed in making herself the better artist, she who starts a career relying on rough undisciplined powers, or that other, who transfers to the stage the natural manner of everyday life, were a question so high above antiquarism that the mere form in which it is put might well seem to involve question-begging. Assuming, however, that the natural manner is ascribed to the actress whose talent seems *primâ facie* to be that of the comedian, and that the undisciplined powers are the possession of the actress whose earliest impulse is to "reduce everything to a controversy of elocution," the problem still appears to admit of the very widest possible solution.

You may prophesy that the stagey actress will gradually restrict her playing within the limits of nature and of art. Or you may assert that the natural actress will insensibly extend her range till it includes that of pathos and of declamation. But, if you wish to escape the charge of dogmatism, you will refrain from making your contraries contradictories, you will forbid yourself to "shut the gates of mercy" on either actress: in both cases, you will make the fullest allowance for the possibility of growth and of development.

To descend, however, from the hypothetical to the actual, from the general to the particular, is, it cannot be denied, to discover the triumph of the natural school. Compare the recent achievements of the natural players with those of their rhetorical colleagues, and you will find that, not only in modern drama, but even in the seemingly antipathetic classical drama, the victory rests with the former. Mrs. Patrick Campbell, Miss Lena Ashwell and Miss Fay Davis hold, in public and in critical estimation, a position undoubtedly superior to that occupied by Miss Julia Neilson, Miss Lily Hanbury and Miss Evelyn Millard. In what may be called drawing-room plays, this superior position is held, I need scarcely say, by sheer force of personality.

Mrs. Campbell's expression of the refined, neurotic woman; Miss Ashwell's depiction of the untamed, Egertonian woman; and Miss Fay Davis's revelation of a new type of Manon Lescaut, infinitely winning and triumphantly virginal, manifest the completest sympathy with the later, and more legitimate, trend of the feminist movement. And recent revivals of "Romeo and Juliet," of "Julius Cæsar," and of "As You Like It" show that the poetic drama is as easily within the scope of these actresses' art. On the other hand, Miss Neilson, Miss Hanbury and Miss Millard have made no marked impression in any modern play; and, even in the romantic and the rhetorical drama, a lack of warmth, of sensitiveness, and of flexibility has helped very materially to snap the telepathic strings that should have connected players with play-goers.

These strings are always kept in a state of tense vibration on those too rare occasions which mark the stage appearances of Mrs. H. B. Irving, the subject of my latest portrait. Miss Dorothea Baird, to give the lady her maiden name, is one of those graceful and intelligent young actresses who are equally at home in modern comedy and in poetic drama. Sincere, unaffected, ingenuous, and passionate, Miss Baird, by mere charm of person and of personality, tinges with poetry the problem plays of Mr. Parker and of Mr. Barrie, and lends a touch of sweet, workaday humanity to the Phœbes, the Helenas, and the Rosalinds of the Bard.

So far as she has progressed in her profession, she has met with rather limited opportunities. In all her important roles, in "Trilby," in the "Happy Life," in the "Wedding Guest," she has been condemned to impersonate a lovely, sweet-tempered child-woman, whose buoyant happiness is wrecked by some grim caprice of fate. But she can interpret characters other than that of the helpless, hapless *ingénue*; she can do more than reveal beauty of face, of figure, and of speech. In "A Court Scandal," a comedy of intrigue adapted from the French, she manifested a certain delicate humour and touched the note of high comedy; and, when she played at the Grand, Islington, in a melodrama of Chinese life, entitled the "Mandarin," she showed a dramatic grip and vigour which were fully worthy of the consort of that ardent and intense young character-actor, Mr. Harry Irving.

Miss Dorothea Baird has not come into her own yet: has not revealed anything like the full measure of her powers. But, if beauty, breeding, intelligence, and education can advance an actress in her career, they should help Miss Baird to go far.—THE CANDID FRIEND, November 23rd, 1901.

W. A. L. B.

Miss Dorothea Baird

No. XXIII.

# MR. WILLIAM GILLETTE. NO. 2.

# Mr. William Gillette—No. 2.

THE stage presents no more convincing or conscientious actor than Mr. Gillette, who is now playing "Sherlock Holmes" at the Lyceum and who could not take greater pains to give a correct and persuasive reading of his part if that part were Hamlet. It is not only a question of make-up, although in this talent he is extraordinarily adept, seeming, as it were, to step on to the boards in the guise of the famous amateur detective from the very pages of the *Strand Magazine*. He does more than that: he treats this part with the greatest seriousness; he could not, as I have hinted, treat it more seriously if he were playing Shakespeare's subtlest character. Holmes's voice is, in the play at least, a thing apart; it does not help the action, and it is brought in only, I think, because it is often referred to in the book. But Mr. Gillette refuses to neglect it, as he so well might: he insists upon it; and from his first entrance we see before us the morphia-bitten hero of the book as its author imagined him.

Mr. Gillette plays with uncommon and striking reserve. His performance is imbued with actuality; he makes each point or effect with the utmost quietness: he rarely gesticulates; a twitch of the fingers, a compression of the lips, a mere hardening of the muscles of the face suffice him for the expression of an emotion; and yet the action of his performance is continuous: he gives no pause to allow that expression to take effect upon his audience; he is too sure of himself and of his power for any such stageyness. It is this composure, this sureness, this thorough grasp of the situation which make his performance so admirably restful to the spectator. Unusual though his methods may be, he is perfectly easy to understand; and, as one watches each slow, deliberate, and never-mistaken movement, one begins to feel as serenely sure that all will be well, that there will be no difficulties, as when reading some limpid, pellucid writer of prose.

Mr. Gillette is more than a sincere and convincing actor of high intellectual power. He is a not inconsiderable dramatist, and has written a number of pieces which, if not marked for any particular literary merit, are all good, workmanlike, serviceable stage-plays. His first play, the "Professor," was produced no less than twenty years ago. He next assisted Mrs. Hodgson Burnett in the construction of "Esmeralda," and subsequently wrote "Digby's Secretary," which became merged into the "Private Secretary." Then came his very successful "Held by the Enemy," in 1886; and this was followed by a dramatisation of Rider Haggard's "She," and, later, by "All the Comforts of Home," "Wilkinson's Widows," "Ninety Days," and "Too Much Johnson." In 1895, he wrote the famous play, "Secret Service," in which he first appeared in London. After this came "Because She Loved Him So"; and the last is "Sherlock Holmes." In writing these plays, Mr. Gillette has understood the value of vivid, interesting action, going straight to the point; and, in many instances, he makes this take the place of dialogue with great effect. In a word, they are excellent examples of the actor's play; and in all of them save two Mr. Gillette has himself created the principal part.—THE CANDID FRIEND, November 30th, 1901.

P. M.

*H. William Gillett*

No. XXIV.

# MISS VIOLET VANBRUGH.

# Miss Violet Vanbrugh.

THE disadvantages of being nearly related to an acting celebrity have been feelingly and, withal, modestly pointed out by Mr. Max Beerbohm. The popular actor's personality looms so large in the public eye that the mere writer is on the horns of a dilemma. Either he must be content to remain in the background, or condescend to a lower level of pose and puffery. Where both are actors, the difficulty settles itself; but the problem is far more intricate. Chance brings to the one that opportunity which fits in with temperament and capabilities, and triumph is the result. For lack of the right opportunity, the other languishes, if not in obscurity, at least in the shadow of that triumph, suffering under a tacit, yet none the less active, comparison with his fellow's achievements. The grave injustice of this is obvious, theoretically. In practice, one has only to name Miss Violet and Miss Irene Vanbrugh in order to see its workings.

In the race for fame, the elder sister has been outstripped by the younger. Chance and Mr. Pinero strove on her behalf, and the resultant handicap was too heavy for Miss Violet. Yet it is still, I venture to say, an open question which is the finer actress. "Quex" was written down as the triumph of Miss Irene; but such critics surely failed to discriminate between the actress' share and the author's. As the former was more apparent, more direct in its appeal, it reaped the lion's share of applause. But, whereas Mr. Pinero's mind alone could have conceived Sophie Fullgarney, it is by no means certain that, failing Miss Irene Vanbrugh, the character could not have been realised with all its *gaminerie*. It was, after all, only the product of brains and a temperament: astounding in frankness, superb in *technique*, but still the outcome of brains and a temperament. And these qualities are common to-day, when neurasthenia, the diseased expression of them, is a fashionable complaint. But, for all the art of Sophie, Miss Irene has not yet demonstrated the possession of a heart; and, failing this, her undeniable claims to the title, "great actress," must remain unsettled.

It is otherwise with Miss Violet Vanbrugh. Her *technique* may not be—in point of fact, is not—always irreproachable. But none can gainsay the heart that invariably informs her work. Withal, it is in pure comedy, not in plays of emotion, that she excels. And, as luck will have it, she has of late been condemned to the latter style of piece. Her Lady Ormonde in "Peril" is not a grateful memory. Her "Wedding Guest" one passes over hastily, and with a sigh for the opportunity lost to an actress of the febrile, emotional school, such as Miss Lena Ashwell, Mrs. Patrick Campbell, or, best of all, Miss Olga Nethersole. Judged on such—at best—partial successes, which, coming after "Quex," have created that situation to which I have already referred, Miss Vanbrugh was an actress of slight account. But, happily, history presents another side to the case.

Anne Bullen, in Irving's magnificent revival of "Henry VIII.," brought her to the front as an actress of grace and distinction; while the love-sick Olivia, in "Twelfth Night," established her there. In its charming revelations of growing passion, its delicate humour, this was a gem of acting whose brilliance was scarcely undimmed by the light of Ada Rehan's exquisite Viola. These qualities, newly discovered, were intensified when Miss Vanbrugh played Cyprienne in an English version of "Divorçons!" by Herman Merivale. In vivacity, in forcefulness, in undisciplined spirits, she, for the first time, came near to that incomparable daughter of comedy, Ada Rehan. The latter's exuberance, her voice of honeyed sweetness in striking contrast to her magnificent animalism—in a word, all that contributes to her genius—cannot be reproduced, or even suggested. But Miss Vanbrugh has enough of the Rehanesque manner in her composition to arouse the warmest interest in her future. She was born to play the "Shrew." A single performance of Westland Marston's "Donna Diana" afforded ample proof of that, even to the sceptics. And it is in "the magic garden of Shakespearean comedy," in Mistress Ford, in Portia, and, above all, in Beatrice, that she should labour to the best advantage. Temperamentally, she is in sympathy with them; physically and emotionally, she can realise them.

Shakespeare may not figure in Mr. Bourchier's managerial scheme, but he will be short-sighted indeed, if he let slip the revival of "Much Ado About Nothing." In Benedick, he has a part cut absolutely to his measure, whilst, in his wife, he finds a Beatrice "made to his hand." And, surely, Shakespeare is a more profitable expedient than drifting with "Iris" down the "Undercurrent"?—THE CANDID FRIEND, December 7th, 1901.

R. G. B.

Miss Violet Vanbrugh

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